

TENNESSEE FOLKLORE SOCIETY  
BULLETIN

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E. G. Rogers, Editor

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LEGENDARY ROLE OF HISTORIC WILHOITE\*

The green trees made fuzzy reflections in the slow moving water below just as they had 150 years ago when brave men hacked their way through the dense canebrake of Middle Tennessee, reached Duck River, and made the first crossing at a point which soon came to be known as Fishing Ford. To whom the honor goes of being the first white man to cross Fishing Ford, history has seen fit to place in obscurity. However, the first date 1794 denoting the presence of these hardy frontiersmen remains legible on a gnarled, old oak trunk, but the names carved there have long ago been marred by disappearing weather-beaten bark.

Before the skillful knives of these white men cut away the undergrowth and foliage, before the Indian made his home, his burial ground upon these banks, the waters of Duck River, tumbling against the solid mass of limestone, had worn two white stone cliffs. These banks became the homes of Indians, a congregational spot for tribes. The caves and crevices were their abode while the flat fields and rolling slopes became the site of multitudes of graves. The Creeks were the most common tribe in this section of Tennessee and have left remnants of their crude civilization in field and cove.

Near Fishing Ford an Indian camp was sighted in 1780 by Captain Williams and his twenty men among whom was young Andrew Jackson. With the purpose of locating the harassing Indians these scouts had been distantly following a few braves for many hours. Finally, under a sky filled with stars, the little band stealthily edged, crawled, and climbed abruptly into the soft mud of a river

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\* The Wilhoite Village herein mentioned is on the property more recently owned by the late Governor Henry H. Horton and which is now in the possession of the parents of the author of this article. Mrs. Henry H. Horton was a sister to John Wilhoite. See Contributor's column. (Editor's Note)

bank. Looking up they gazed on a vast barbaric scene separated from them only by a mirror-like stream, Duck River. The clearing, filled with dancing frenzied Indians was lighted by immense camp-fires. Forty-two silent eyes watched, turned, and disappeared back into the night. When two days later a tired little band of men gave their report in Nashville, the scene was placed approximately on the south shore of the head west of Fishing Ford.

Little did the young Andy Jackson dream as he rested from his trip that it would be he who would later fell the forest trees and push the first road, Fishing Ford, through the Indian meeting ground.

As the Indians slowly retreated South, however, a man named Hazelton refusing to wait for a road to be built cleared away the cane and constructed the first cabin to be built in Fishing Ford. Soon he had neighbors only three miles away for in 1808 Chapel Hill, was founded. These pioneers, however, were not connected by roads until General Jackson upon offering his services to the government in 1812 went South carving the Fishing Ford Road as he marched to his two most famous battles, Horseshoe Bend and New Orleans.

The stage coach followed Jackson's new road. Progressing travel sponsored the erection of a covered bridge in 1838. The stage stop was an old, three story, log inn which had grown out of one of the first log cabins at Fishing Ford. Numerous notables were rumored to have filled the old rotunda. It was this inn and the surrounding territory that a widow, Mrs. William Wilhoite (Adeline Warner Wilhoite) purchased in 1845.<sup>1</sup> Also the land on the north bank was purchased and made the site of Wilhoite Mills. In 1846,<sup>2</sup> the construction was begun with slave labor and was directed by Mrs. Wilhoite's twenty year old son, John. Massive cedar logs were used in

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1. History of Tennessee, The Goodspeed Publishing Company, p.1231.

2. Ibid.

construction of the dam, which supplied power for both grist and saw mills. Since its construction the grist mill has remained in continuous operation even during the difficult years of the War between the States.

Union forces swarmed over the slopes and forests of Middle Tennessee and in 1863 marched through the village of Chapel Hill and on to the river. As was the custom at the Wilhoite Mill, wheat was placed on deposit and sacks were the property of the customers. Such were the conditions when the coats of blue were sighted and the beat of horses heard. Suddenly, the mill was overrun. Each Union soldier grasped two sacks of flour, slashed the sacks to threads with flashing sabers, and trampled tatters and contents beneath their horses' hoofs and into the dusty road before the eyes of hungry people.

Young John Wilhoite returning shortly after the Yankee raid for his brother's funeral made monetary reparations for the destroyed property to all owners with the exception of one unreasonable merchant who demanded complete replacement. Cotton sacks were to be found nowhere outside of Yankee besieged Nashville. Consequently, the tall, dark Confederate crossed the river and disappeared into the forest of cane.

Riding in his proud gray uniform, mounted on his favorite steed and seated in his new saddle (a gift of General Forrest), John Wilhoite was easily detected by all as a Southern Rebel. Luck had been with him on his approach to Nashville. Taking back roads, being refreshed at farmhouses along the way, he had finally entrusted saddle, and horse, "Star", to a farmer who lived near Nashville. Now under cover of night he began the perilous portion of his journey. Alert eyes and ears, and Indian-like stealth enabled his safe crossing of the first, second, third, and finally the fourth Yankee picket line into Nashville. Gray dawn found him within Rebel terri-



tory.

After tucking the sacks in a bundle over his shoulder he made his way out again into the night, this time using his new knowledge of Union positions. Feeling confident he had by-passed all pickets unsoon, he tramped on back to "Star" and General Forrest's saddle. While strapping the hard-earned sacks upon his horse, John glanced down at the foot of the hill to see flashes of blue between the trees. Whirling his horse, he led the merry chase over hill, over fence, and into a cornfield with an occasional bullet trimming his gentlemanly hair-cut. Suddenly the flooded, swirling Cumberland River loomed ahead. He spurred his horse and down they plunged. The water covered over head and ears. When they came to the surface the current was whipping them down, and fortunately toward the opposite bank. Horse and horseman clutching desperately at bush and bough, climbed to the dry of the bank while puzzled Yankoes still covered the water's surface with whizzing bullets. A sudden, piercing Rebel yell raised their gaze to see horseman and horse disappearing into the distance. Prized saddle, priceless sacks, and John slipped in home before sleeping Fishing Ford could rouse itself to the morning chores.

Just a mere dot on earth's surface Fishing Ford has been the site of untold drama. Paths of many people have crossed here at the mill now called "Wilhoite". General Nathan Bedford Forrest crossed repeatedly at this spot in the river, but this was not a spot reserved alone for the heroic. Many plain, everyday people centered their lives about this insignificant spot.

Down near the mill a fathomless spring flows into the river. It was here that people came to drink and draw water. One fair, spring day an old, fat, colored woman with a bucket in one hand and

a baby in the other climbed up the hill, chanting as she went about her work. She leaned down to draw up the bucket and down fell the child. The baby, never being recovered became immortalized in tales that have made that spring the talk of the country-side. Today it is known as Haunted Spring and the surest place to see an honest-to-goodness amazing apparition. These ghost tales and idle chatter were a few of the things not altered when Reconstruction began the parade of changes. Houses went up for the workers. These houses, a general store, a staunch blacksmith's shop, a post office and the mill composed the little village of Wilhoite, but more changes were on their way.

One stormy spring day in 1902 the river reached its swirling garments to push bridge and mill down the raging stream passed the houses, banks, rocks by which they had stood so long. When the storm was over and spring flowers sprang up and down the bank at Wilhoite a new mill had grown up, a new bridge had spanned the stream and all of old Fishing Ford was gone but the ghostly stone columns of the bridge, the sturdy slave-built dam, and the old log stage coach stop disguised in white weather-boarding with the original millstone lying idle at the door. "His doorsteps are the stones that ground the harvests of his sires", spoke Whittier. A multitude of changes came and passed by, but one more alteration was to be made, a highway, wide in its span, hard in its surface, and sterling in its name. The name, Fishing Ford, retreated to the leaves of the history book while the little village came to be known as Wilhoite and the new highway proudly bore the name of Fishing Ford's new son. Horton Highway stretched beyond the horizon, past the mill, old inn, and over the hill. Names have changed, but these river banks still live and breathe of that rare, old spirit of pioneer and antebellum days. The Fishing Ford turnpike is now a shady lover's lane through a

pleasant pasture of grazing jersey's. The covered bridge has disappeared but the stream flows on just as it did when Indians stalked their prey and buried their dead.

by Adeline Horton  
Lewisburg, Tennessee

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## BORROWING FROM THE MOON

Even the sun has been disposed to share its tides with the moon. The man in the moon has determined with much predilection his part in the routine of our lives. Songs have been sung to it, lovers have longed for it, and in its reflected beauty has been given many appellations of appraisal and glory. And we go right on paying it a sort of deistic reverence as being more than a sort of foster-parent in our lives. Because of her sheen of subdued beauty, we have christened the moon as "she" and placed her next to the sun Solus. In this role of far-away nearness, she goes right on working for us and against us according to her passions and our needs.

Let us further examine the record of her exaction and displeasure: The moon first of all presides over our natal day:

1. Born under a constellation of a new moon, you will be a bright child.
2. Born under the light of the moon, you will grow tall.
3. Born under the dark of the moon, you will become stout.
4. Born under different phases of the moon according to the Signs of the Zodiac, you will have different personality traits and capabilities.
5. Being born simply under "a lucky star" seems to have its more general aspersions.

Secondly, the moon has much to do with the conditioning of man's environment:

1. When a board roof is put on in the light of the moon, the end of the boards will cup up.
2. When soap is made on the light of the moon, it has a better quality.
3. When hogs are killed on the light of the moon, the meat will be tough; on the dark of the moon, it will render out more grease.
4. When made on the light of the moon, soap will lather better.
5. When the moon is full, cracklins will render out the greatest amount of lard.
6. When laying a fence worm, this should be done on the dark of the moon so the rail will not sink into the earth, but will remain firmly on top of the ground.
7. When you make soap on the dark of the moon, the soap will be dark.
8. When soap is boiled on the full moon, it is apt to boil out of the pot.



9. When a man and a woman are married on the increase of the moon, their possessions will increase; where married on the decrease of the moon, their possessions will decrease.

In the third place the moon helps us to predict the weather from day to day:

1. When the moon is turned up, there will be dry weather; turned down, wet weather.
2. When there is a ring or halo around the moon, it will be as many days before it rains as there are stars in the halo.
3. When the moon is tilting toward its corner, there will be rain.
4. When there is a ring around the moon (no stars), bad weather is imminent.

In the fourth place we do much of our planting and harvesting in the moon. This category includes our "signs of the Zodiac" and very special days:

1. All rooty plants should be planted in the dark of the moon.
2. All non-rooty plants should be planted in the light of the moon.
3. Irish potatoes should be planted in the full of the moon.
4. Cucumbers planted on Twin Days (Zodiac) will produce abundantly with a minimum of vine.
5. Irish potatoes planted on the light of the moon will make much vine and few potatoes; on the dark of the moon, and the reverse will be true.
6. Corn planted in the dark of the moon will produce larger ears nearer the ground than if planted on the light of the moon.
7. Corn planted on the light of the moon will grow tall with many of the stalks barren.
8. A dark Christmas means a good fruit year.
9. Plant melons in the sign of the arms (Zodiac).
10. Plant flowers in the sign of the bowels.
11. Plant corn in the sign of the loins.
12. Plant radishes in the sign of the thighs on the darker moon-phase.
13. Plant potatoes in the sign of the thighs when the moon is on the wane.

14. Plant beans when the sign is in the heart.
15. Plant beans on Good Friday.
16. Garden peas will bear more planted on the light of the moon.
17. Plant flowers on the 14-15-16 of May.
18. April 14-15-16 is a good time to destroy weeds.
19. March 27-28 are good days for the planting of Irish potatoes.
20. Sorghum planted in the light of the moon will grow taller.
21. Watermelons planted in the light of the moon have a better flavor.
22. Cotton should be planted when you hear the first whip-poor-will.
23. Irish potatoes should be dug before dog days.
24. Cucumbers or melons planted in the morning will grow much better.
25. Watermelons planted on the first day of May will make good melons.
26. Grain crops planted in a waning moon will produce more grains; but if planted when the moon is going from new to full, there will be more stalk and less grain.

In the fifth place, the moon may directly and indirectly control certain hazards of our destiny, for:

1. If a meteor or shooting star passes across a well-lighted sky, it is an indisputable omen of coming war.

by E. G. Rogers  
Tennessee Wesleyan College

57  
B I R D L O R E

H. V. Massey

What would the sportsman do without the quail, doves, pheasant, and wild turkey? Many is the number who go out each year to hunt our birds with dog and gun. Tall hunting stories are told of each hunt, but there is a lore that is as old as our association with birds. Let us turn to birdlore as it has been handed down to us through the years now gone.

We have many poems and songs of birds; and our Bible has many fine references to our birds too. But aside from these, let us turn into the field of folklore, and pick up some of the old quaint sayings about birds. You will recall some that I will not mention. That's the way it is with birdlore - nearly every community has some of its own.

When the Screech Owl sings from the cabin roof, there will be a death in the cabin within a week, the old folks used to say. Now the only way to break the omen is to pull off your shoes and turn them up-side down under the bed. To be sure that the 'spell' is broken, everyone living in the house must turn his shoes over under his bed. To neglect this may mean that he who forgot to turn his shoes may die within the week.

It is funny how the song of this little owl will make the 'pimples' rise on the back of most people. He is the best rat-killer in the country. He may sing from my roof all he pleases - and he may have my mice and rats for pay. He has sharp, round, noisicle wings, and can catch mice quickly.

When the Cuckoo sings late of an evening, we may look for rain, say the old folks. When it is generally believed that spring can never open until the Cuckoo sings his first song. It is true that the Cuckoo is one of the birds that postpones its nesting until late fall. From this habit, we have come to say that a person is "cuckoo".

Most of us have tried our fortune with the flight of the Cardinal. We make a wish upon him, and if he flies up; our wish will come true; if he flies downward, it will not come true. Maybe we older folks would not admit it, but we have wished a thousand wishes on the Cardinals.

When the old rooster crows with his head toward the house, someone is sure to visit that house that day; and if he crows with his head away from the house, someone will leave on an unexpected journey.

The crowing hen is sure of the pot; and the old rhyme about a "whistling girl and crowing hen always come to some bad end" has been a fireside story for ages. Many old folks would never let that old hen crow the second try.

Boys and girls were told never to kill a dove, for each has a drop of human blood in its veins. Then there is the folklore that each dove has some green feathers on each shoulder, much like the olive branch brought to the ark.

My grandfather used to tell me that the Meadowlark was not good to eat, saying that it has a worm in each wing. How many of us have heard that to put our hand in a bird's nest would cause her to leave it. How many of us have gone to a turkey's nest with a tablespoon to gather the eggs. To put the hand in the guinea's nest, or the duck's nest, would "break her up" sure.

Then there is the old story that should one carry a setting of

eggs across a stream, they will not hatch. How many hens have had eggs put under them after dark, so there would not be any roosters hatched. Then who has not heard the old saying, "He doesn't have enough sense to set a hen on a hillside"?

Of course we have all heard of the great work of the stork. I remember that our old hired man told my father that he could not come to work the next week. My father made inquiry, and here is what the hired man said, "Well, the stork is sitting on my housetop looking down the chimney". Every day as I passed his house on my way to school, I looked in vain for that stork. Late Saturday night he hurried to our house and got Dad to drive in for the doctor. All he said was, "Hurry, Mr. Massey. My bees are swarming".

All that was so much "dutch" to me, for I had seen no stork; and I know quite well that he did not have a hive of bees to his name. I may have been the "cuckoo", but I was just a little boy.

Thousands of "polly bones" have been slyly broken under the table, only to find a hiding place over the door. Try that as I may I could never get the right girl to come in the door under mine. I may have had better luck carrying the good-luck omblon in my pocket.

There is the story that the Bluebird had to eat persimmons while in the ark which stained its breast forever; and was so glad to get out it flew to the sky and brought some of it back in its blue feathers.

I used to think that the story about the Buzzard "barping" on an intruder about its nest was just so much "balam". I found one's nest in a cliff when I was a boy - and when I got home, my Ma thought that I had been with the skunks.

I never did like to say that old saying to the buzzard: "Turkey buzzard! Turkey Buzzard! Look to the east, look to the west! If you see my sweetheart coming - flop!" Many a country boy has talked it that to the buzzards, however.

If a bird happened to get into my grandmother's house, she would tie a whisp of her hair over the door, and drive the bird out under it. That was sure to bring much joy and happiness.

Once when I spent some hard earned money at a county fair for a trifle, my uncle told me that what I had bought wasn't worth a "last year's bird's nest". He came from a community where mothers poured hot, mullon tea through an old bird's nest to cure whooping cough. Sometimes they used chestnut leaves, but their tea also was poured through an old bird's nest.

"Oh the Cuckoo is a pretty bird; She sings as she flies,

You'll never know how much a girl loves you, Until you look in her eyes" - is an old old song.

We boys used to sing it this way: "Oh the Cuckoo is a pretty bird; She sings on the fly; If a limb don't fall on me: I'll live 'til I die".

If a neighbor boy got to thinking too much of a neighbor girl, we changed the last line to: "If true love don't kill me, I'll live 'til I die". That generally cured "puppy love". If it didn't, we knew he had the real thing.

It is as interesting as can be, the folklore of our birds.



Aunt Vick Reminiscences  
Mrs. Paul Seaton

When I was eight years old we had occasion to move down near the head of the Okefenoke Swamp. There among the pine and palmetto woods lived many negroes who tended the turpentine woods. Their manner of thought, speech and action fascinated me to a great extent. I don't think I ever saw one of them unhappy except when he was scared.

Being extremely superstitious, these negro folk could entertain with tales of witchcraft and ghost stories. My two brothers and I often listened to their stories and wished we could have experienced some of these unusual happenings.

One old lady in particular told these tales in such a convincing way that we believed them. She was a blind woman and seemed to have a supernatural quality about her that no one doubted. Everyone depended on her to conjure their warts and moles off and when a baby had a convulsion she was taken to drive the bad spirit away.

One Saturday afternoon in the hot summer Mother told my two brothers that we could take Aunt Vick some cookies. Old Mill Pond had to be crossed right near Aunt Vick's house. I shall never forget thinking that no matter if an alligator did get us, Aunt Vick was in hearing distance and could conjure the alligator into turning us loose.

On that warm day Aunt Vick was seated on a yard bench out under a chinaberry tree (she must have been ninety years old then). My little brother yelled to ask if she knew we were coming. She told him she had had a token that somebody was coming to see her. The negroes had stood in front of the door and crowed three times. Didn't we all that she had on a clean apron for company?

"Well bless my soul, chillun", she went on. "Did youh mamma see me anything?"

Now how could she have known that Leonard had in his hand a fine lot of sugar cookies? We asked her to guess. Her eyes opened and began to wall around - the whites of them were as a flake of snow amid a pile of coal. Perhaps the vanilla Mother had used in making the cookies was smelling loudly. As usual Aunt Vick guessed "something sweet".

"Now tell us about yourself", we insisted. Her life's story never grew old to a wide-eyed trio like us. She always added something spicy to any old tale that she presented.

"They aint nothing to tell, only ...", and Aunt Vick was off to a good start at story-telling.

It seemed that she, Victoria Yates Cathan, had been born of slave parents. The parents had no name save the name their master had given them. Everyone had a given name and went by his master's last name.

From early dawn to twilight, her parents tended the stock, till the soil and cared for the crop of turpentine trees. If they were ever freed, she did not know it.

On one occasion Master Yates had bull-whipped Vick's mother for "letting up" at the end of the cotton row. Her mother had dropped a hairpin and was down on her knees hunting it - hairpins were scarce in 1836. That night a spirit had entered the master's room and cast a spell over the master. He was heard to say "Let me go! Let me go! That negro needed whipping!" Aunt Vick said the Evil Spirit was not to throw him into Old Mill Pond.

When Victoria was large enough to be taken from her mother's breast, Master Yates sold her. A widow, Mrs. Cathan, paid him a barrel of lye soap for the little pickaninny. Victoria missed her mother's cooing words and jolly tunes in the evenings, but she soon became adjusted to life with the Cathans.

At the age of six, Victoria was given some responsibilities that she took care of beautifully. She was to be the caretaker of the five-year-old Cathan twins. She saw to it that they were amused and kept comfortable.

Bart and Elizabeth Cathan came to think of Victoria as being possessed with unusual powers. She knew just exactly what the bullfrogs said as they leaped into the pond. The barnyard people could talk to her in animal language that she could understand. Victoria conveyed all these conversations to the twins, who stared in amazement at her knowledge.

Once when they were late coming home from a visit, a ghost had stopped their horse right in the middle of the pine forest. Victoria had asked the ghost what it wanted and to please move so they could go on home. The ghost had disappeared. The twins - then nine years old - knew that Victoria had power, even over ghosts. The Cathan family made fun of the twins, when they related the story, but Victoria convinced them that it was true.

Washing clothes on New Year's Day was out of the question with Victoria. On one occasion she had washed on New Year's Day and bad luck had followed all year. Even a death in the family had occurred. Every New Year's Day since then had been spent at home, quietly. Peas and hog jaw made up the menu for every New Year's Day dinner. The men-folk of each family were sent to their neighbor's house to take the New Year blessing. If a woman entered another home except her own, it was considered very bad luck.

Stepping over a broom was definitely a bad luck sign. When Victoria was a yearling of a girl, she and the white Cathan children were jumping over some brooms. Victoria had fallen and hit her head on a stone. The stone cut very deep, a hole which Mrs. Cathan filled with turpentine and sugar-Victoria stayed in a dark room several days. Gradually her forehead healed but her eyesight faded. Before long their "sugar-headed" negro was totally blind. If it had not been for jumping over the brooms, she would had her sight, so Victoria thought.

Not long after Victoria went blind, the slaves were freed. She never made any contact with her folks. Whether they had died or not Victoria did not know. She was taken to a home that was built to take care of the poor and helpless. All her life was devoted to curing warts and moles off people, curing convulsions by putting her beanie brim right down over a person's face and repeating certain words, etc.

Since Victoria had never seen her daddy (he had died before she was born), she could cure the trench mouth in babies. She had a certain motion to make and a few words to say, under her breath. Immediately, the baby would begin to show signs of improvement.

## MEMORY BOOK "GEMS" \*

Long years - long years have passed away  
 And altered is thy brow,  
 And we who met so gladly once  
 Must meet as strangers now.<sup>1</sup>

.....

I love you now, and will forever;  
 You may change, but I will never.

.....

Oh, greens' forsaker, and yellows' forsworn,  
 But blue is the sweetest color that's worn.

.....

Doubt show the stars are fire,  
 Doubt that the sun doth move,  
 Doubt truth to be a liar,  
 But never doubt my love.

.....

Remember me when life is sweet,  
 Remember me when next we meet,  
 Remember me when years have fled,  
 Remember me when I am dead.

.....

The roads are long and muddy,  
 The sea is wide and deep,  
 I think of you, my darling,  
 Ten thousand times a week.

.....

My heart to you is given.  
 And if you will give yours to me,  
 We will lock them together  
 And throw away the key.

.....

\* First four items are copied from an old manuscript  
 dated October 9, 1865.  
 1 Contributed by Mrs. L. L. McDowell, president, T.F.S.

When the golden sun is sinking  
 And your mind from care is free,  
 And you are alone thinking,  
 Will you sometimes think of me?<sup>2</sup>

.....

When the golden sun is setting  
 And my face no more you see,  
 When a thousand things you're thinking,  
 Will you sometimes think of me?

.....

Remember me when years have fled  
 And I am numbered with the dead,  
 When my face you cannot see,  
 Just look at this and think of me.

.....

We are wise, we are witty,  
 We are single, what a pity!  
 If you are single for my sake,  
 What a couple we would make.

.....

Your eyes are of a sparkling blue,  
 Like diamonds they do shine.  
 Your conversation is so sweet  
 It charms this heart of mine.

.....

Through bright paths I have wandered  
 Where all was joy and gloe,  
 But my heart was ever lonely  
 Because I could not be with thee.

.....

Farewell, and if by distance parted  
 We see each other's face no more,  
 Oh, may we with the faithful-hearted  
 Meet beyond this parting shore.

.....

When in the lonesome grave I sleep  
 And bending willows o'er me weep,  
 'Tis then, my love, and not before,  
 That I can think of thee no more.

.....

<sup>2</sup> Note similarity between this and the two which follow.



## HORRID FROG \*

Authors present the popular things,  
 Their beliefs in poems and prose;  
 But the news I have to ring  
 Is a wart right on my nose!

I start to read my books each night.  
 The light is all blacked out,  
 I lean my head both left and right  
 And then I yell and shout!

I drink my coffee every morn,  
 Use cream and sugar too;  
 But would you know this darn ole corn-  
 It tries to drink it too.

One day I saw a stranger pass,  
 He made a face at me,  
 For at the wart I'd made a slash  
 To set a pigeon free.

I try all methods old and rare  
 Of friends both tried and true  
 To rid my nose of constant stare,  
 But none of these will do.

I asked a doctor to tell me  
 Who caused this social clog.  
 He smiled and said, "Now let me see,  
 Where is that horrid frog."

\* Aubrey L. Jones, student at Tennessee Wesleyan College,  
 gives us this version of the frog-warts superstition.

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## S. F. S. NOTICE

Perhaps you are interested in belonging  
 to the Southern Folklore Society and in re-  
 ceiving the Southern Folklore Quarterly.  
 Membership for the year is \$5.00 or \$3.00,  
 which also includes membership in the South  
 Atlantic Modern Language Association. Mem-  
 bership dues may be sent to Office of the  
 Editors, Southern Folklore Society, University  
 of Florida, Gainesville, Florida.

On Jordan's Stormy Banks, by Adelaide Rowell. The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis, 1948, \$3.00.

Sam Davis came from that sturdy stock of Tennessee parentage which so often has added gallantry to the yeomanry of the South. Living near Smyrna, Tennessee, in Rutherford County, Sam inherited the splendid qualities of both of his parents. The author's masterly delineation of Sam's parents is characteristic of one of the elements of the strength of this book.

The story opens with a Secession rally in Nashville followed by a period of conflicting loyalties in which neighbors distrust one another and only whisper their confidences. A few brief months at Western Military Institute, and Sam enlists in the Rutherford Rifles. Sam's friend Gay Hardison enlists in the Rock City Guards. Both are later assigned to the First Tennessee Regiment until each a little later is assigned to Coleman's Scouts under General Cameron as the intelligence unit of the Confederate operations. Having first served in the Virginia Campaign under Lee, and at Perryville, Kentucky, under Bragg, Sam's work there becomes that which subjects him to a sort of danger incredibly more hazardous than bullets.

Between battles and other assignments, Sam does a great deal of courting, but it is the masterful handling of this contrast of tragedy and hope in a forceful panorama of historical background so deftly etched with sorrow's dreaming and youth's courage which reveal Adelaide Rowell at her best.

Sam makes the acquaintance of Connie Hardison, daughter of a staunch Secessionist, Felix Hardison, who had chosen to remain neutral. With Connie Sam falls ardently in love. Then comes the fall of Nashville and the impending fate of the Confederacy predicted in the events rapidly focalizing upon Chattanooga. Sam returns to Smyrna, to Connie, and to Nashville as the occasion and assignment offers opportunity. But the cordon is constantly drawn tighter, and scouting becomes indeed hazardous.

It was in 1863 that Sam left Smyrna for the last time. He and Connie had planned to be married within a month. Sam safely reached Columb and was passing down a hill in Giles County when intercepted by Federal troops. The hour had come. Sam possessed information which would incriminate him as a spy and a traitor. The ending is most dramatic. It is the work of an artist. The inevitable end of the story is well-known, but in the hands of Miss Rowell and even within the shadow of the scaffold, Sam becomes "a type" which penetrates beyond the ghostliness of stark tragedy.

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Spooks of the Valley: Ghost Stories for Boys and Girls, by Louis C. Jones. The Riverside Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1948, \$2.50.

This volume, illustrated by Erwin Austin, is a collection of Folklore of the Upper Hudson Valley. Many of the ghost stories contained here are collected from materials relating to characters fairly well-known to legend and history. Mr. Jones has adopted these stories to the theme and purpose of this volume.

These stories have to do with a ghost so real that he becomes most realistically human until he mysteriously vanishes; a conversation between George, Joe, and Pete about the discovery and more orderly reburial of Pete's bones; the reappearance of Captain Kidd whose conscience caused him to say, "The smooth liars and tricky politicians saw to it that I hung - I had but little choice"; the arrangement for Pete for Captain Kidd to retell to them at the Staats House one night the story of "The Horseman of Leeds"; the hitch-hiking girl whom the boys picked up and carried to the dance, to learn later that they danced with the ghost of the dead girl Eloise; the ghost train of Lincoln; the night spent in a house which they discovered, in the morning, did not exist; the meeting with many of the early colonists whose ghosts were natural or distorted according to whether they had carried any prejudices to the grave; the statement by the ghost of Ticenderoga that it is sometimes more fun to be dead than alive in order to give chase as the Headless Horseman; and finally being led by Aunt Polly into the cavernous depths and passageways of the old house where they see but are warned against the hidden treasure of Captain Kidd. An excellent book for the children's library.

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The Witch of Scrapfogget Green, by Patricia Gordon. The Viking Press, New York, 1948, \$2.50.

The traditional village Witch had laid quietly beneath a huge stone within the English Village Green until a great American bulldozer plowed deeply into the green releasing the Ghost Witch again to be upon her forays among the villagers. To the small twins, a boy and a girl who witnessed the excitement, we are indebted for a review of the cobweb-like mysteries which followed.

The legends of the countryside are recalled as the news of the witch release gains momentum. The twins were having more fun than children had known since the village had buried its witch in the very long ago. Chickens exchanged places with rabbits, people leaving the Tavern tumbled over the huge boulder before the doorway, a scaffold of lumber was scattered like straw, and the village chimes sounded in the reverse order to their customary ringing.

Finally a mass-meeting of villagers was held at the church to deal

what might be done. Some one struck upon a solution where it was agreed that if the Witch be responsible for all these happenings, "the logical thing to do is to restore her tombstone to its original site. It would have to be done at midnight ceremoniously, of course placing the stone due East and West as tradition demands. And since tomorrow night be Friday the thirteenth, it might as well be done this night". The volume is effectively illustrated with drawings by William Penn DuBois.

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Memphis Down in Dixie, by Shields Monahan. E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., New York, 1946, \$4.50.

Memphis Down in Dixie! "People here have much to hold in memory - the planter era, the river glory, the tragic - comic battle before the town of Confederate and Union boats, the fall and occupation of Memphis, the daring exploits of General Forrest, the yellow-fever scourge, the days when Handy brought the blues out of Beale Street, and the political dog days when Mr. Crump emerged to rule while the city grew and prospered."

Memphis is strategically located which has had much to do with what has happened there. Memphis is a river town, but it is also a railroad town. It is the planter's capitol for "King Cotton". It was once strategic as a frontier town where many flags have been hoisted and pulled down according to the flux of circumstances. Deseat visit along the Bluffs as early as 1541, the French in 1739, and then the Spanish again from Natchez in 1795. The Stars and Stripes were raised over Memphis on October 22, 1797. Land deals followed with Chickasaw Indians and Memphis began as a city of many growing pains. "The Indians had gone; the gamblers and flatboatmen terrorized the town no longer; only the mosquitoes could raise hell with impunity."

Around Memphis Nathan Bedford Forrest dealt in the slave market as secondary to a planter's estate. Here Forrest prospered as a respected and useful citizen. Memphis sent 4000 men into the defense of Memphis in the Civil War, many of them under the able leadership of General Forrest whose successful strategy has become increasingly well-known.

Along about the 1870's were the great steamboat days upon the river. These were the days as well of the rousters and their roustabout songs. The roustabout waterfront lasted for some three decades - to around 1900. The rouster was himself a slave to "Old Man River".

Memphis is the home of the adventurous globe-trotter, Richard Halliburton, and of Clarence Saunders of "Piggly Wiggly" fame as a chain-store operator. Negroes compose forty percent of the population here who, in their potentialities, have contributed greatly to the life and resources of the city. Through them William Handy has contributed to the galaxy of the world's artists through melody. In Memphis



today King Cotton lives on. And in Memphis is the man politically best mentioned, most sought after, most honored, and most feared of any man down Dixie-way. But the Song "Mr. Crump" which paraded the Mayor to glory and power has already become the well-known "Memphis Blues", but Memphis is like that - this "Memphis Down in Dixie".

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#### NORTH CAROLINA FOLKLORE: GREETINGS

The initial publication of "North Carolina Folklore", a publication of The Folklore Council of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, has just reached our desk. Congratulations upon the appearance of this splendidly new publication. It is edited by Hoyt S. Bruton and Ralph Steele Boggs and Robert W. Linker as his assistants.

This June, 1948, issue carries a variety of titles of subject-matter interest bearing upon legend, tradition, custom, folktale, ballad, craft, medicine, folk fads, proverbs and riddles. "Rope-skipping Games", "The Devil at A Revival", "Pender Popping", "Candy Cracking", "Syrup Making", "Soap Making", and "How Dan'l Boone Nearly Nipped A Romance" are some of the more specific titles.

Communications may be addressed to Editor of North Carolina Folklore, The University of North Carolina, Box 1050, Chapel Hill, N.C. The subscription rate is \$2.00 for the year.

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We have learned recently that Mrs. Isla Paschal Richardson of Tullahoma, author of "My Heart Waketh", has submitted a manuscript for another volume which will be titled "Wind Among the Pines". Readers of Mrs. Richardson's first volume will anxiously await the publication of this new volume.

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It was necessary to get out this issue of the Bulletin before the program for the annual meeting could be formulated. Members will be notified of the program, therefore, a little nearer the time of the annual meeting which will probably be held as usual about the first part of November.

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## MEET OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Reverend H. V. Massey of McMinnville, Warren County, Tennessee, is the author of the article on "Birdlore" in this issue. Mr. Massey has appeared on numerous Society programs as well as to contribute interestingly to its publications.

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Miss Adeline Horton is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John W. Horton and granddaughter of the late Governor Henry H. Horton of Leburg, Tennessee. Miss Horton who contributes a series of folk songs to this issue is a sophomore at Waco Belmont College in Nashville. She is a most enthusiastic folklorist and welcome contributor.

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Mrs. L.L. McDowell of Smithville, Tennessee, is president of the Tennessee Folklore Society having been returned to this position now for the third consecutive year by the nominating committee and with the unanimous consent of the Society. Mrs. McDowell and her late husband co-authored several books on folk music. The latest of these was "Memory Melodies", published last year. Mrs. McDowell contributed "Memory Book Gems" to this issue.

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"Horrid Frog" by Aubrey Jones of Lenoir City, is an original interpretation in folk superstition. He secured the account of "Rugby in Tennessee" which was printed in the last issue. Mr. Jones is a student at Tennessee Wesleyan being a member of the student council, the summer school staff of The Bulldog (school newspaper), and last year's president of the freshman class.

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Mrs. Paul Seaton who contributes "Aunt Vick Reminisces" is a native of Florida but later lived in Boxley, Georgia, and now resides at R. 3, Athens, Tennessee. She is a summer school student at Tennessee Wesleyan College.

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 by the  
 Tennessee Folklore Society

President  
 Mrs. L. L. McDowell, Smithville

Vice-President  
 Charles F. Bryan, Nashville

Treasurer  
 T. J. Farr, Cookeville

Secretary and Editor of the Bulletin  
 E. C. Rogers, Athens

#### Among Our Exchanges

We are glad to welcome to our exchange list the publications of the Secretario de la Comision Nacional de Folklore, Republica de Colombia, Bogota (Col.), sent to us by Luis Duque Gomez, the secretary. Among publications received are Revista De Folklore, Numero 1, Noviembre, 1947, also the December issue. These are examples of a notable beginning, having to do principally with a statement of purpose and principle and with a sensitive but rather scholarly explanation of the various areas of Spanish lore and tradition. Also received is a collection of Spanish poetry by Octavio Quinones Parde titled "Introduccion de la Poesia Popular", and "Refranero Colombiano" which is a Biblioteca de Folklore Colombiano. A most welcome exchange. Come again.

#### Membership Renewal

The treasurer, Dr. T. J. Farr, Tennessee Polytechnic Institute, Cookeville, Tennessee, will appreciate your renewal for next year either at the annual meeting in November or at least before the expiration of the calendar year. This will enable him to keep his file active rather than having to reactivate them after the expiration of the year. Membership in the Tennessee Folklore Society is \$1.00 for the year which includes the subscription to four issues of the Bulletin and all membership privileges. The membership year is the calendar year, and the final Bulletin is issued in December.

Your attention is called elsewhere to membership in the Southern Folklore Society.

Membership fee includes subscription to the Bulletin. Membership correspondence should be mailed to Dr. T. J. Farr, Tennessee Polytechnic Institute, Cookeville, Tennessee.